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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 5029
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0173
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0149
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0673
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 0603
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STATE FOR EAP/ANP, EAP/MLS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEAN](#) [BM](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND TO REMAIN TOUGH ON BURMA

REF: A. A) STATE 148530

[B](#). B) STATE 148528

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor Margaret McKean; Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

[1](#). (C) Pol/Econ Counselor met on November 5 with Bernadette Cavanaugh, the newly arrived head of the SouQast Asian office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to discuss Burma and next steps for the GNZ. Cavanaugh related that her office has been working on a proposal for the government that outlines various ideas to remain engaged on Burma. She underscored that PM Helen Clark has been clear that New Zealand will raise Burma at every appropriate bilateral and multilateral meeting, and at all levels. The PM plans to discuss Burma at the East Asian Summit Leaders lunch. During the recent ARF intersessional meeting Brunei, Burma was a topic of discussion, according to Cavanaugh.

[2](#). (C) Raising Burma to the level of the Security Council would be a new step for New Zealand, allowed Cavanaugh, but New Zealand is looking at a variety of options. Regarding sanctions, absent a Chapter 7 resolution, New Zealand domestic law does not allow imposition of sanctions. However, the violence in Burma has underscored to the government that there may be instances where New Zealand may want to impose sanctions without the benefit of a UNSC resolution. Therefore, the government has asked MFAT's legal division to examine if New Zealand might usefully be amended to allow for such a possibility. The legal division has also been asked to discuss the matter with other partner governments.

[3](#). (C) Cavanaugh reported that the GNZ assesses the most useful avenues for positive action on Burma are China, India, and the ASEAN countries. To that end, New Zealand missions in China and New Delhi and in those ASEAN capitals where New Zealand has a diplomatic presence were asked last week to demarche the Foreign Ministries in capitals regarding Burma, said Cavanaugh. In all instances, New Zealand officials pressed host country governments to do more as well as stated New Zealand's position that the issue should go to the Security Council. In Beijing, Chinese authorities reportedly told New Zealand interlocutors that China believed that Gambari was doing a good job and to allow him to continue to work. In New Delhi, the New Zealand embassy's attempts to schedule a meeting with the Foreign Ministry have been rebuffed; Cavanaugh opined that their mission believed Indian officials were trying to avoid discussing Burma.

[4](#). (C) New Zealand's assistance program to Burma amounts to roughly NZ\$500,000, with all of it going through

international agencies such as UNDP and WFP. The GNZ is examining if any of that money is more available to Burmese officials as opposed to the public. There are also a small number (approximately 6) English-language training scholarships and roughly a dozen other scholarships; the GNZ is also analyzing if those benefit officials or their families.

15. (C) Finally, New Zealand has put off indefinitely its ASEAN dialogue meeting, originally scheduled for later this year. New Zealand is Burma's dialogue partner, and the GNZ has informed other ASEAN countries that there will be no meeting with ASEAN because of Burma. Initial reaction within ASEAN has been positive, and Cavanaugh acknowledged that pressure on New Zealand to schedule a meeting may materialize in the future, as there remains 18 months before the rotation to Malaysia -- a long time without a dialogue meeting between ASEAN and New Zealand.

16. (C) P/E Counselor noted that the Asian Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) would be meeting in January 2008, and that might be a useful venue for discussions on Burma, particularly with those ASEAN countries represented. Cavanaugh responded that the APPF was a useful idea and agreed to include it in the MFAT proposal to government. Cavanaugh offered to provide a readout to us regarding New Zealand's discussions on Burma at the EAS

McCormick